

## Message Text

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ACTION NEA-10

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 IO-13 CIAE-00 DODE-00 PM-05 H-01  
INR-07 L-03 NSAE-00 NSC-05 PA-01 PRS-01 SP-02  
SS-15 USIA-06 ACDA-07 SSM-03 OMB-01 TRSE-00 /081 W  
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R 011432Z AUG 77  
FM AMEMBASSY AMMAN  
TO SECSTATE WASHDC 2618  
INFO AMCONSUL ALEXANDRIA  
AMEMBASSY CAIRO  
AMEMBASSY DAMASCUS  
AMCONSUL JERUSALEM  
AMEMBASSY JIDDA  
AMEMBASSY TEL AVIV

C O N F I D E N T I A L AMMAN 4350

ALEXANDRIA PASS SECRETARY VANCE'S PARTY

EO 11652: GDS  
TAGS: PGOV, JO, IS, US, XF  
SUBJ: JORDANIAN REACTION TO ISRAEL SETTLEMENTS ANNOUNCEMENT

1. SUMMARY: JORDANIAN PAPERS HAVE DENOUNCED ISRAELI SETTLEMENTS  
LEGALIZATION BUT HAVE NOT OVERREACTED. IN GENERAL, JORDANIANS SEEM  
WILLING TO DOWNPLAY ISSUE FOR MOMENT IN EXPECTATION THAT U.S.  
WILL AT SOME POINT HAVE TO FACE BEGIN'S WEST BANK INTRANSIGENCE  
DIRECTLY. END SUMMARY.

2. FOLLOWING SWIFT DENUNCIATION OF ISRAELI ANNOUNCEMENT OF PLANNED  
"LEGALIZATION" OF WEST BANK SETTLEMENTS, JORDANIAN EDITORIAL  
OPINION QUICKLY TURNED TO EXAMINATION OF U.S. REACTION TO ISRAELI  
MOVE. ALTHOUGH CONDEMNATORY STATEMENTS ISSUED BY PRESIDENT CARTER  
AND SECRETARY VANCE WERE INITIALLY DISMISSED BY PRESS EDITORIALS  
AS ONE MORE CONTRIBUTION TO "RUBBISH HEAP OF PREVIOUS RESOLUTIONS  
AND STATEMENTS ON ME," MORE SOBER OBSERVERS SUBSEQUENTLY TOOK  
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LONGER-RANGE VIEW OF SITUATION. BY JULY 31, LOCAL EDITORIALS WERE  
TAKING POSITION THAT WHILE ARABS HAD PLAYED BY GROUND RULES LAID  
DOWN BY PREESIDENT CARTER (I.E. MUTING OF STATEMENTS ON ME  
UNTIL AFTER SECRETARY'S VISIT), ISRAELIS WERE PLAYING DOUBLE GAME  
BY SMILING SWEETLY IN WASHINGTON WHILE LATER EMBARRASSING U.S.M  
ONCE BEGIN HAD RETURNED TO TEL AVIV. EDITORIALS THEN ASK, "WHAT  
DOES U.S. PLAN TO DO IN FACE OF SUCH INSOLENCE?"

3. PAPERS GENERALLY REPEAT SAME THEME - HAS BEGIN GOVERNMENT'S  
LEGALIZATION OF SETTLEMENTS BROUGHT HOME TO PRESIDENT CARTER THE  
LESSON THAT ARABS LEARNED LONG AGO, OR WILL U.S. CONTINUE TO BE  
DELUDED INTO BELIEVING THAT ISRAEL WANTS TRUE PEACE? TIME IS  
RUNNING OUT, NOTES PRESS, FOR WHILE ARABS RETAIN FAITH IN INTER-  
MEDIARY ROLE OF U.S., THEIR PATIENCE IS NOT INEXHAUSTIBLE.

4. COMMENT: PRESS COMMENTARY APPEARS ACCURATELY TO MIRROR JORDANIAN  
PUBLIC OPINION ON PROSPECTS FOR MIDDLE EAST PEACE IN GENERAL, AND  
ISRAELI POLICY IN PARTICULAR. JORDANIANS HAVE VIEWED BEGIN'S  
GOVERNMENT BASICALLY IN TERMS OF ITS EDUCATIVE EFFECT ON U.S.  
POLICY MAKERS. THUS, WHILE RECENT ANNOUNCEMENTS ON SETTLEMENTS PRO-  
DUCED LITTLE REACTION PER SE (SINCE ACTION WAS SEEN SIMPLY AS  
FURTHER PROOF OF BEGIN'S WELL-KNOWN INTRANSIGENCE ON THIS ISSUE),  
ISRAELI MOVE HAS IN SENSE "THROWN FAT INTO THE FIRE," IN THAT  
TIMING AND NATURE OF ANNOUNCEMENT VIEWED AS DIRECT SNUB TO U.S.  
AND OUR PEACE EFFORTS. ARAB LEADERS, IT IS BELIEVED HERE, HAVE  
DIPLOMATICALLY MUTED THEIR PUBLIC COMMENTS IN EXPECTATION OF VISIT  
OF SECRETARY TO AREA. SHOULD ISRAELIS CONTINUE TO ADOPT SIMILAR  
POLICY INITIATIVES, THEN IT IS FELT HERE, ONUS WILL BE ON  
AMERICANS' BACK EITHER TO REACT MORE STRONGLY THAN IN THE PAST, OR  
TO EXPECT DETERIORATION IN ARABS' WILLINGNESS TO ACCEPT U.S. AS  
HONEST BROKER IN ME DISPUTE. IN SHORT, JORDANIANS WILLING TO  
DOWNPLAY SETTLEMENTS AS THEY DOWNPLAYED MANNER IN WHICH WEST BANK  
ISSUE WAS FINESSED DURING BEGIN VISIT, BUT IT ALL HELPS TO RAISE  
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PRESSURE AND EXPECTATION HERE THAT UNDER PRESENT CIRCUMSTANCES,  
THEY WILL AT SOME POINT REQUIRE U.S. CONFRONTATION WITH ISRAEL OR  
JEOPARDIZE FAITH WHICH JORDANIANS NOW HAVE IN OUR SINCERITY AND  
PERSEVERANCE.  
PICKERING

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## Message Attributes

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**Channel Indicators:** n/a  
**Current Classification:** UNCLASSIFIED  
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**Review Markings:**  
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